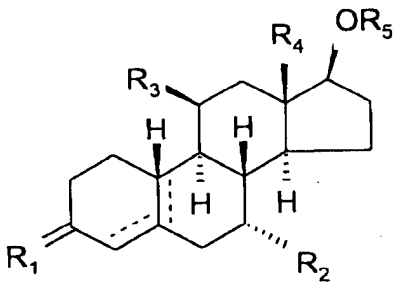
Attorney Docket No. O/99469 US

In the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A compound of the structural formula:



(I)

wherein

R_1 is O, (H,H), (H,OR), NOR, with R being hydrogen, (C_{1-6})alkyl, or (C_{1-6})acyl;

R_2 is ~~(C_{2-3})alkyl~~ (C_2)alkyl, isopropyl, (C_{2-3})1-alkenyl, isopropenyl, 1,2-propadienyl, or (C_{2-3}) 1-alkynyl, each optionally substituted by halogen; or R_2 is cyclopropyl, or cyclopropenyl, each optionally substituted by (C_{1-2})alkyl or halogen;

R_3 is hydrogen, (C_{1-2})alkyl, or ethenyl;

R_4 is (C_{1-2}) alkyl;

R_5 is hydrogen, or (C_{1-15})acyl; and

the dotted lines indicate optional bonds;

with the proviso that the compound is not (7α,17β)-7-ethyl-17-hydroxyestr-4-en-3-one (7α-ethyl-19-nortestosterone) or a

carboxylic ester thereof, and is not (7α,17β)-17-(acetyloxy)-7-propylestr-4-en-3-one (7α-propyl-19-nortestosterone acetate).

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The compound according to claim 1, wherein R_2 is selected from the group consisting of ethyl, ethenyl, ethynyl, ~~propyl,~~ 1-propenyl, 1-propynyl, 1,2-propadienyl, and cyclopropyl.

4. (Previously Amended) The compound according to claim 1, wherein R_1 is oxo, R_3 is hydrogen, and the dotted lines indicate a Δ^4 double bond.

5. (Previously Amended) The compound according to claim 1, wherein R^2 is ethyl or ethenyl.

6. (Previously Amended) The compound according to claim 1, selected from the group consisting of (7α,17β)-7,13 -Diethyl-17-hydroxygon-4-en-3-one and (7α,17β)-7-Ethenyl-13-ethyl-17-hydroxygon-4-en-3-one.

7. (Canceled)

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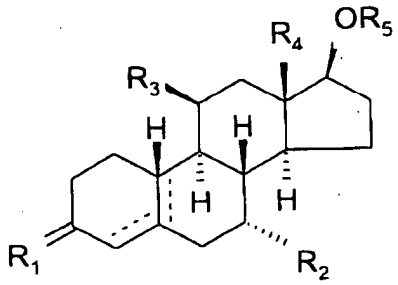
8. (Previously Amended) A pharmaceutical composition, comprising:

a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and

a steroid compound, as a medicinally active agent, satisfying formula I



(I)

wherein

R_1 is O, (H,H), (H,OR), NOR, with R being hydrogen, (C_{1-6})alkyl, or (C_{1-6})acyl;

R_2 is ~~(C_{2-3})alkyl~~ (C_2)alkyl, isopropyl, (C_{2-3})1-alkenyl, isopropenyl, 1,2-propadienyl, or (C_{2-3})1-alkynyl, each optionally substituted by halogen; or R_2 is cyclopropyl, or cyclopropenyl, each optionally substituted by (C_{1-2})alkyl or halogen;

R_3 is hydrogen, (C_{1-2})alkyl, or ethenyl;

R_4 is (C_{1-2}) alkyl;

R_5 is hydrogen, or (C_{1-15})acyl; and

the dotted lines indicate optional bonds.

9. (Currently Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 8, wherein R^2 is selected from the group consisting of ethyl, ethenyl, ethynyl, ~~propyl,~~ 1-propenyl, 1-propynyl, 1,2-propadienyl, and cyclopropyl.

10. (Previously Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 9, wherein the steroid compound is selected from the group consisting of (7α,17β)-7-ethyl-17-hydroxyestr-4-en-3-one, (7α,17β)-7,13-diethyl-17-hydroxygon-4-en-3-one, and (7α,17β)-7-ethenyl-13-ethyl-17-hydroxygon-4-en-3-one.

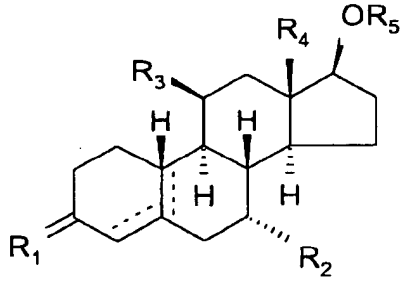
11. (Previously Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 8 suitable for oral administration.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Withdrawn) A kit for male contraception comprising a progestagen and an androgen, wherein the androgen is a compound according to claim 1.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of treatment of androgen insufficiency, comprising:

administering to a patient in need thereof an effective amount of an androgen, wherein the androgen is a steroid compound satisfying formula I



(I)

wherein

R_1 is O, (H,H), (H,OR), NOR, with R being hydrogen, (C_{1-6})alkyl, or (C_{1-6})acyl;

R_2 is ~~(C_{2-3})alkyl~~ (C_2)alkyl, isopropyl, (C_{2-3})1-alkenyl, isopropenyl, 1,2-propadienyl, or (C_{2-3})1-alkynyl, each optionally substituted by halogen; or R_2 is cyclopropyl, or cyclopropenyl, each optionally substituted by (C_{1-2})alkyl or halogen;

R_3 is hydrogen, (C_{1-2})alkyl, or ethenyl;

R_4 is (C_{1-2}) alkyl;

R_5 is hydrogen, or (C_{1-15})acyl; and

the dotted lines indicate optional bonds.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of treatment according to claim 14, wherein R_2 is selected from the group consisting of ethyl, ethenyl, ethynyl, ~~propyl,~~ 1-propenyl, 1-propynyl, 1,2-propadienyl, and cyclopropyl.

16. (Previously Amended) The method of treatment according to claim 15, wherein the steroid compound is selected from the group consisting of (7α,17β)-7-ethyl-17-hydroxyestr-4-en-3-one, (7α,17β)-7,13-diethyl-17-hydroxygon-4-en-3-one, and (7α,17β)-7-ethenyl-13-ethyl-17-hydroxygon-4-en-3-one.